

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-02 IO-13 H-01 INR-05

INRE-00 EUR-08 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 SSO-00 /048 W

-----094167 240024Z /62/14

O 231025Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6699

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

JCS WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 09952

LIMDIS

(C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - P A R A S , R E N U M B E R E D)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, BE, CG

SUBJECT: SHABA INVASION: BELGIAN TROOPS TO STAY

IN SHABA INDEFINITELY IN FACE OF DETERIORATING SITUATION

REF: A) BRUSSELS 9852(NOTAL) B) USDAO/BRUSSELS 9862 (NOTAL)

1. FOREIGN MINISTER'S DEPUTY CHEF DE CABINET GAVE
US READ-OUT EARLY MORNING MAY 23 ON TWO CABINET
MEETINGS HELD THE PREVIOUS NIGHT. FIRST MEETING
IN THE EARLY EVENING CONFIRMED THE DECISION TO KEEP
A BELGIAN ENLARGED BATTALION (500 MEN), COMPLETE WITH
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SUPPLY, TRANSPORTATION AND AMMUNITION, AT KAMINA
WHILE BRINGING BACK TO BELGIUM THE REST OF THE BELGIAN
CONTINGENT OF THE 1179-MAN TOTAL FORCE. ONKELINX
SAID THAT THE REMAINING BELGIAN FORCE WOULD STAY
IN SHABA "INDEFINITELY."

2. ONKELINX SAID SECOND CABINET MEETING LATER IN THE

EVENING WAS CALLED TO REVIEW THE TOTAL PICTURE IN SHABA, INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET'S APPROACH TO U.S., UK AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS IN BRUSSELS MAY 22 (REFTEL A) PROPOSING THE FORMATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE TO PROTECT WESTERNERS THROUGHOUT SHABA. ONKELINX SAID BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAD REPORTS OF A DETERIORATING SITUATION IN LUBUMBASHI, WHICH INCLUDED INFORMATION OF KATANGESE INFILTRATORS WITHIN THE CITY ITSELF. HE SAID BELGIAN GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT REPORTS OF EXTENSIVE SYMPATHY OF THE LOCAL POPULATION IN LUBUMBASHI FOR THE KATANGANS AND HAS DOUBTS ABOUT THE RESPONSE OF THE FAZ ELEMENTS THERE TO THIS THREAT, INCLUDING POSSIBILITY THAT FAZ WILL SEEK TO PREVENT EUROPEANS FROM FLEEING THE CITY. HE SAID THAT THE FRENCH - AT THE MILITARY COORDINATION LEVEL AND NOT GOVERNMENTAL - HAVE BEEN URGING BELGIAN PARATROOPS TO GO INTO LUBUMBASHI RIGHT AWAY AND ASSURE THE SECURITY OF THE CITY ("DIVIDE UP THE WORK"). ONKELINX SAID THE CABINET MADE NO DECISIONS IN THIS REGARD BUT IS FOLLOWING THE SITUATION CLOSELY.

3. ONKELINX TOUCHED BRIEFLY ON PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S BROAD-SIDE ATTACK ON FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET AND PRESENT BELGO-ZAIRIAN TENSIONS. HE SAID THAT CHEF DE CABINET ALFRED CAHEN, FORMER DCM IN KINSHASA AND CLOSE FRIEND OF MOBUTU, IS GOING TO PARIS MAY 23 TO MEET WITH MOBUTU DURING AFRI-CONFIDENTIAL

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CAN SUMMIT. ONKELINX FELT CONFIDENT THAT CAHEN WOULD BE ABLE TO WORK OUT DIFFERENCES AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS WITH MOBUTU WHILE AT THE SAME TIME REVIEWING WITH HIM THE WHOLE SHABA SITUATION. ONKELINX ALSO FELT THAT THE AFRI-CAN SUMMIT IS GOOD VENUE TO SEEK TO MOVE FORWARD ON BELGIAN PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE - WITH AFRICAN PARTICIPATION - TO PROVIDE FOR THE REQUISITE SECURITY IN SHABA.

4. FROM BRUSSELS VIEWPOINT, ELEMENTS ON THE MOBUTU-SIMONET POLEMIC INCLUDE CHARGE CARRIED IN BELGIAN PRESS THAT BELGIAN TROOPS WERE "LAST IN AND FIRST OUT" IN SHABA. GOZ ALSO HAS ALLEGED THAT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT SOUGHT TO NEGOTIATE" WITH THE KATANGANS, WHICH GOZ VIEWS AS TANTAMOUNT TO "RECOGNITION." ONKELINX SAID THIS THESIS HAD ORIGIN IN BELGIAN STATEMENT FEW DAYS AGO CALLING ON UN, OAU AND THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS TO HELP COPE WITH THREAT TO REFUGEES IN KOLWEZI. ONKELINX SAID RED CROSS REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE FNLC.

5. BELGIAN PRESS RADIO, AND TELEVISION HAS BEEN GIVING HEAVY COVERAGE TO HORROR STORIES OF KOLWEZI EVACUEES

ARRIVING IN BRUSSELS, MANY OF WHOM CHARGE THAT THE FAZ
OFFERED VIRTUALLY NO RESISTENCE TO KATANGESE INVADERS
AND THAT MANY JOINED THE REBELS. ZAIRIAN EMBASSY HAS
ISSUED TERSE PUBLIC STATEMENT EXTOLLING VIRTUES OF FAZ
AND ALLEDGING THAT KATANGESE REBELS STOLE UNIFORMS FROM
FAZ KILLED IN ACTION THUS GIVING RISE TO THESE
UNWARRANTED ACCUSATIONS OF FAZ MISCONDUCT. PRESS ALSO
REPORTS THAT MOBUTU HAS INSTRUCTED HIS AMBASSADOR IN
BRUSSELS TO HAVE NO CONTACT

WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET.

6. ONKELINX SAID SIMONET WISHED TO BE INFORMED THE
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MOMENT WE RECEIVED RESPONSE TO HIS MAY 22 APPROACH
TO AMBASSADOR CHAMBERS ABOUT U.S. PARTICIPATION IN AN IN-

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 IO-13 H-01 INR-10
EUR-12 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /064 W
-----086363 231132Z /14-S

O 231025Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6700

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

JCS WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BRUSSELS 09952

LIMDIS

TERNATIONAL FORCE. HE PROMISED TO KEEP US FULLY
INFORMED ON ALL DEVELOPMENTS. DE TARR

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Message Attributes

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